

A Weapon of Defence

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Sudden Death.

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A brief Description of the desperat times in which we live. Being a brief and true Relation of the evils that proceeds and follows after vain-glorious opinions and cursed Desperation : By the example of several people both in the City of *London*, and in other parts of our Nation. Shewing the manner of their ungodly living, and how they came by their untimely deaths this present year, 1656. for want of serving of God, and taking good heed.

Here is also a brief and true

Relation of the terrible storms of Lightning and Thunder, Hail and Rain which happened at *Norwich*, July 20. 1656.

Written by *L. Price*, and printed on purpose for others to take warning by,

London, Printed for *W. Gilbertson* at the sign of the Bible in Giltspur Street, 1656.

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The Epistle, or Preface

Briefly shewing and setting forth the mercies of God, the frailty of man, the deceitfulness of the world, and the temptations of the Devil; Being a fit pattern for all sorts of people, whether they be rich or poor; not onely to look upon, but also to bare it in remembrance, and to thinke upon it at every up-rising and down-lying, and at every going forth and comming in, and my Prayer shall be, that God will be pleased to give a Blessing both to your souls and bodies, so that you may never fall into desparation, nor come by any untimely death, as of late too many have done, as you shall hear in this my strange and true Discourse.

Collected and written by one that would wish that all men might have care how they lead their lives,

Your Friend, L. P.



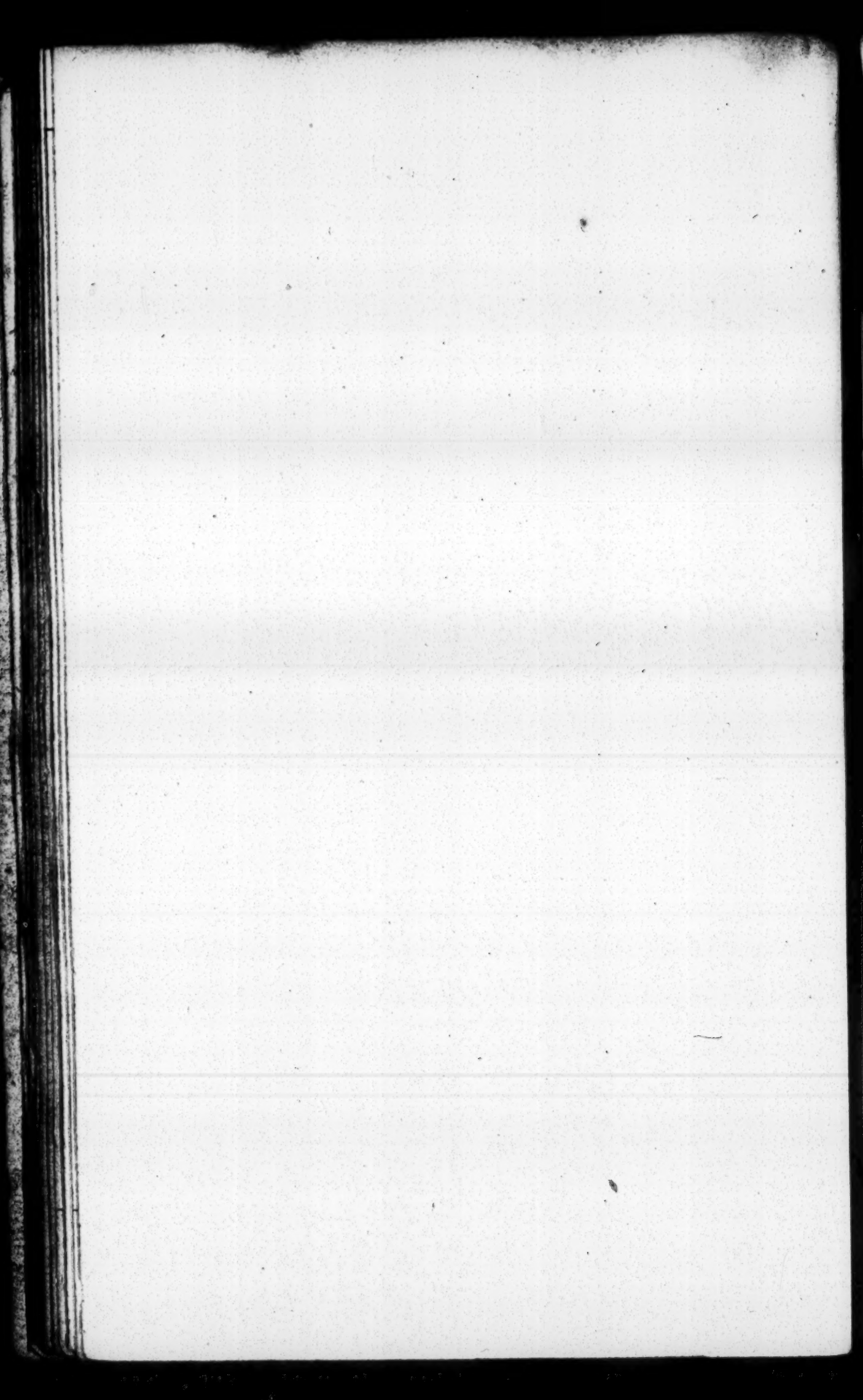
A Weapon of Defence against Sudden Death.

On the first day of March this present year, 1656. which is called Saint Davids day there was one David Harrison living in the Town of Meedly in Yorkshire, a Tapler by trade, who was given very much to mocking, scoffing, and jesting, Swearing, Drunkenness, and the like; It chanced so that he coming into an Ale-house where were some of his acquaintance, he sat down to drink with them, being half drunk before he came in; so his Neighbours shewed him civil respect, and bade him sit down: Now mark what after came to pass, this David Harrison said, and did swear a most bloody Oath, that he would make all the folks in the house drunk of his own charge, in honour of his name, because it was S. Davids day, so calling in for a dozen together, he began to drink Healths to one, and to another, so long, that he had made himself so drunk, that he could hardly go or

stand, his Neighbour all perswaded him to forbear swearing and drinking, and to go home, but the more they perswaded him, the worse he was, for every time he drunke he spew'd it up again, and every time he spake he swore a bloody Oath, and at the last he swore God dam him body and soul if he did not drinke himself sober again, before he did go out of the house; but in that he was falsly forsworn, for as he put the flagon pot to his mouth, thinking to have swallowed down all the drinke, his nose burst out a bleeding, and he fell backwards to the ground like a man distracted of his wits, where he lay cursing and swearing nigh upon eight and forty hours, for his bleeding at nose could never be stoppt nor stinted, till such time he had bled himself to death; and now I leave it for all men to judge whether this man had not his death deservedly.

But surely, though a man will say, that every one shall have that Death which is allotted for them; My opinion is this, if he had served God in a better manner, he might have come to a better end, and that if he had made good use of his

to present



his time, he might have lived many a
 fair year longer; But to be brief, the
 matter that is here spoken of was sent
 up in a Letter from the Masters of the
 Parish where it was done, and desired
 to have it put in Print, to the end that
 all Mothers and Scorners, Swearers,
 and Pot-companions, both in the City
 of London, and in all other places may
 take warning hereby, and with speed re-
 mend their sinfull lives, which G D
 grant we may all do.

Here followeth another strange and true
 Relation of the deplorable life and
 untimely death of James Parnell, a
 Quaker.

Some people of England are now
 grown to such a giddy-headed man-
 ners, the like was never known in any
 Age before, as it may appear by one
 James Parnell a Quaker, which travelled
 up and down from place to place prea-
 ching and teaching false Doctrine, and
 telling them that all that were not of
 his

his Congregation were damned to eternitie ; moreover he said , how that the Bible was of none effect , and that Davids psalms were but Ballads : Furthermore he said , that he himself was a Prophet , and that he could do as many Miracles as Christ did do when he was living on the earth , and that he was able to make the deaf to hear , the dumb to speak , the lame to go , the blind to see , and to raise the dead to life again ; Now mark what became of him at the last , through his vain-glorious opinion of himself , After he had travelled through many Cities , Towns , and Countries , as London , Bristol , Gloucester , Exeter , Salisbury , Worcester , Hereford , Cicester , Chichester , Southampton , the Ile of Wight , Winchester , and many other places , still teaching the people after his own inventions ; he came at last into the County of Essex , where he finished up his last dayes , the manner how was this , he told the people there , that if they would believe in him he would shew them a miracle , and said that as Christ fasted forty dayes and forty nights , so would he undertake to

to do, but for seducing the people, and
bringing them to a false belief, and for
his Blasphemies, he was apprehended,
and sent to Colchester, and there kept
in prison, where he undertook (as he
said he would do) to fast forty days and
nights, so because he would have no ex-
cuse for his falacy, he was watcht that
none should come to give him victuals
in private, but if he would eat openly in
the sight of the people, he was allowed
to have as much victuals as he would
desire, to be set before him every day:
But to be brief, he still continued in his
own wilfull perversities, and fasted ten
days and nights together, and he as-
tisted of one bit of bread nor drop of drink,
and all this was done because he would
have been thought to have been a Pro-
phet, but the eleventh day he became to
be so hungry, that he had no longer pa-
wer to forbear, but call'd for food, and
had it brought unto him, but alas it did
do him no good, for by reason of his o-
ver long fasting, his guts and intestines
were clammed up, and clung together,
insomuch that the victuals could not
have its naturall passage into the parts

of his body which it should have gone
to, and so in that miserable taking
was starved to death, having plenty of
viuals at command, but could not
eate.

And being dead a Jury of men went
upon him, whereby to find the true man-
ner of the cause of his death, and so at
the last they gave up their Verdict to
this purpose, that he was guilty of his
own death, and that he had done wilfull
murder upon himself, in that he restrai-
ned himself from that bodily sustenance
that the Lord in mercy hath ordained
for the relief of all mankind: And be-
cause no one shall have any cause to
make any doubt of the truth hereof, it is
witnessed by Master Jude Tayler the
Fore-man of the Inquest, and Master
Joseph Smith, another of the Inquest,
who with the consent of Master Alder-
man Gae of Colchester, the Verdict
was given in and approved, on May the
fifth, 1656.

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Here is a true Relation of a most horrid Murder committed on the River of *Thames* by two Watermen, and afterwards discovered by themselves, who were executed for the same Murder in July last, 1656 at *Maidstone* in *Kent* and afterwards brought to *Gravesend* and their hang'd in Chains both upon one Gibbet, for others to take warning there by; The manner was as followeth.

In the year th at is here spoken of, on the time which is called my Lords Maiozs day, a young man that lived near *Smithfield-Bars*, whose name was *Christopher Savage* unfortunate y kill'd his Mother-in-law with a stab of a knife, the cause wherefore it was done there's no man can tell, for so soon as ever he had done the bloody deed he ran away, and so took Boat to go by water because he would not be discovered, but as they were upon the water, he began to tell the watermen strange matters, and said that he was a *Quaker*, and had been at a
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agge and sold a great many head of
Cattle; moreover he said that his busi-
ness was in great haste, and that if they
would row apace he would pay them
well for their pains, for he said he had
money enough; whereupon the Water-
men seeing the Coast to be clear, laid by
their Oars and ran suddenly upon him,
so one held him that he should not stirre
whilst the other cut his throat; So so-
ner was this bloody murder perfozmed,
but they took away his money, tyed a
great stone about his body, because he
should sink to the bottom, & so throw him
over-board into the water, thinking that
he should never be seen nor heard of a-
gain: But now mark the wonderfull
works of the Lord, how strangely mur-
der will be brought to light, though it
be done never so secretly, these two Wa-
termen which had done the Murder after-
wards fell out about sharing the Money,
one of their names was Smith, and the
others name was Gurney, both of them
dwelling in Gravesend; Sometime
Smith would say when they were in a
place where they thought no body could
hear them, that Gurney had more share
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of the Money then he had ; Sometime
Gurney would say that Smith had the
greatest part of the Money ; but at one
time amongst the rest they fell out grie-
vously, and were ready to fight about it,
and one of them told the other in plaine
terms that he was the party that cut the
mans throat, and cast him over-board,
which words were heard and taken no-
tice of, whereupon they were both appre-
hended and sent to Maidstone Gaole,
and at the Assizes were found guilty by
the Jury, condemned by the Judge, and
according to their deserts were both
hang'd in Chaines near Gravesend in
Kent, where all the Passengers that
goes or comes that way either by Land
or by Water may see them.

Here

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Here followeth another strange Relati-
on which is very well known to be
true.

UPon the twentieth day of July, this
present year 1656. in the county of
Norfolk there hapned such a dreadfull
tempest of Thunder, Lightning, Hail
Raine, and Whirle-winds, that the
like thereof was never seen nor known
in England by the oldest man or wom-
an that is now alive, which tempest first
of all began at the City of Norwich, it
being then the Sabbath of the Lord about
four or five a clock in the afternoon;
the manner how the tempestuous weather
began in Norwich was in this manner;
The first apparitions that were seen and
taken notice of was Lightning and thun-
der in a most strange and violent manner
which made the people all amazed that
saw the lightning and heard the thunder,
in so much that some thought that the
world was then at an end, but tis very
known that their sorrow was not
then at an end, let them think what they
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would, for it was so that in a little time after there appeared a mighty black Whitchy Cloud, which darkened both the Sun and the Skye, insomuch that the that stood one close to another, could hardly know one from another, yet that Cloud afforded store of fire, in such plenty, as if it had come from the mouth of a Furnace, with such a smoke as if it had proceeded from hell it self.

Then presently after followed a bright shining Cloud, which the people understood to be a token of Gods mercy towards them, and so it was indeed, for had the black Cloud continued a longer time there, it is supposed by men of good understanding, that matters had hapned worse then they did, and it was too bad as it was, for why immediately there came such a mighty storme of Hail and Rain that poured down as if Hea-ven and Earth would come together, with a strong whirl-wind, that the force thereof beat down many Buildings; and made the Glasse windows to fly in pieces, insomuch that five thousand pounds will not suffice to make that good that was spoiled at that time,
Some

Some of the Hail-Stones being taken up were found to be as big as Hodgeons Eggs, some as big as Hens Eggs, and some bigger.

But that's not all, for the Countrey round about felt and suffered greater extremities; for by the means of the dreadful Lightning that fell from the Sky, there were many Ricks of Hay and Corn set on fire, and by the violence of the Thunder, and Whirl-wind, houses were beaten to the ground, and many people lost their lives. A multitude of Corn was quite destroyed by Lightning and Thunder, and Trees were torn up by the roots; Birds flying in the ayre were stricken dead, and Herbs and Flowers in fields and Gardens blasted. Some grounds that were fruitful and bore Corn on Saturday night, was made like Plow'd land before Monday morning: These things (dear Christians) are hard to be believed, but it is known to be too true.

And now to draw to a conclusion let us consider that this was the handy work of the Almighty God of Heaven and Earth, and that he that did so by them,
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can do the like to us therefore let us all
with faithful hearts and true repentance
seek the Lord whilst he may be found in
mercy.

One thing more is to be considered
concerning the hayle-stones that fell in
the City of Norwich how them that
were the biggest and greatest of all were
of divers severall shapes and fashions,
some of them had the likeness of a mans
eye to be seen in them, some had the
likeness of a mans face; some of them
were like Great Buttons which is a fa-
shion that is now in great request in the
City; some of them were like pieces of
Ice, and had the likeness of a Lion upon
them, and many other strange shapes
were then to be seen: These things in
the judgment of the world seems to be
impossible, but there is nothing impossi-
ble to God; and verily I am perswa-
ded that God sent these wonderfull signs
and tokens amongst them so sudden and
unexpectedly, to put us all in mind of a
greater sorow that will shortly come
upon the World, except we speedily re-
pent and amend our sinful lives.

Upon

UPON the five and twentieth day
of July, at Lemster, and the Coun-
trei thereabouts there was such a hor-
rible Tempest of Thunder and Light-
ning, which destroyed and blasted a num-
berless deal of Corn, of Hops, and of
Garden fruits, and Orchard fruits, in-
somuch that many people are undone by
the means thereof: And at Bransyard
in Worcesterhire the Lightning set four
Barns on fire that self-same night.

The 26. day of July in Nottingham-
hire there was a wonderfull strange
tempestuous weather, the like whereof
there's no man alive can remember, for
in the darkest time of the night there a-
rose such a terrible Tempest of Thun-
der, Lightning, Hail and Rain, as if
heaven and earth would come together;
insomuch that the people that were tra-
velling upon the road, might by means
of the flashes of Lightning see every way
what was before & behind them, as brief
as if it had been at noon day, by means
whereof were many Barns, Ricks, and
fields of standing Corn burned and
consumed to ashes, and many people killed
with the Thunder.

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